

# Bertha B. Williams Academy

## Response to VDOE Staff Review

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Date:

Please submit by **Monday, January 11, 2016:**

1) two hard copies at address below

2) .pdf version electronically to [Diane.Jay@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Diane.Jay@doe.virginia.gov)

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## Bertha B. Williams Academy

The table below depicts a summary of the Department staff report of whether the Bertha B. Williams Academy application met the criterion needed to satisfy the charter school components by topic area. Seven criteria were not met.

The pages that follow contain a description, by Roman Numeral, of the component in which the criteria were not met and include the reviewer's comments (indicated in blue-italics).

When the applicant is responding to reviewer comments in the box provided, each area of concern cited above the box should be addressed in the response box. (The box will expand to accommodate responses.) **Only** include attachments if they directly relate to a staff comment such as an organization chart, updated budget, cash flow chart, etc. The attachment should be clearly named and cross referenced by the Roman Numeral and number of the area to which the attachment relates.

SUMMARY of VDOE Reviewer Comments		
Required Application Components		VDOE Staff Review Met the Criterion
I.	Executive Summary	Yes
Education Components		
II.	Mission Statement	Yes
III.	Goals and Educational Objectives	No
IV.	Evidence of Support	Yes
V.	Statement of Need	No
VI.	Educational Program	No
Logistical Components		
VII.	Enrollment Process	Yes
IX.	Transportation	Yes
X.	Residential Charter School	N/A
Business Components		
XI.	Economic Soundness	No
XII.	Management and Operation	No
XIII.	Employment Terms and Conditions	No
XIV.	Liability and Insurance	Yes
XV.	Disclosures	Yes

**Education Components**

**III. Goals and Educational Objectives:** State the goals and educational objectives to be achieved by the public charter school that meet or exceed the Standards of Learning (SOL).

The following components must be addressed:

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *The educational objectives and goals are primarily drawn from the Standards of Learning (SOL) and the Curriculum Framework. However, performance-based goals and measurable objectives are minimal or lacking in some content areas.*

1. A description of the performance-based goals. To the extent possible, the application should include the academic performance indicators, measures and metrics that will guide the local school board's evaluations of the charter school and should include, at minimum: a) student academic proficiency; b) student academic growth; c) academic gaps in both proficiency and growth between major student subgroups; d) attendance; e) recurrent enrollment from year to year; and f) postsecondary readiness (for high schools).

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *Performance-based goals are generally listed; however, the charts on Pgs. 16-20 should also describe science performance-based goals. Performance indicators should be included for Health and PE.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer comments:**

In reference to the omissions of the performance-based goals and measurable objectives, the performance goals for English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies will be the same as stated in the Virginia Standards of Learning Accountability Report. All students will make or exceeds the expectations as stated by the state of Virginia. The Health and Physical Education performance goals will be measured by school-based assessments for health and the VDOE Physical Education Fitness performance expectations for Physical Education. The application will be revised and resubmitted once all revisions have been approved by the VDOE Charter Review Committee.

2. A description of the related measurable educational objectives to be achieved by the public charter school. ([Section 22.1-253.13:1.B](#), Code of Virginia)

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *Throughout the application the Virginia SOL are generally referenced; however, on Pg. 75 and 76, the NY State Regulations and the NY State Common Core Learning Standards are referenced as the core curriculum. The only reference in this section to science is a citation of the Code of Virginia.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer comments:**

The reference to the NY State Regulations and the NY State Common Core Learning Standards will be removed. The applicant should have referenced Virginia Standards of Learning instead. Science has been included throughout this application.

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**V. Statement of Need:** Describe the need for a public charter school in a school division or relevant school divisions in the case of a regional public charter school, or in a geographic area within a school division or relevant school divisions. The following components must be addressed:

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *Data to substantiate the need for a public charter school within the division are needed.*

1. A statement of the need for a public charter school that describes the targeted school population to be served and the reasons for locating the school within a particular school division.

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *The applicant references an achievement gap between socio-economic groups and racial/ethnic groups, particularly immigrant students but does not provide data specific to Norfolk to support the claim. Also, the applicant does not provide data or information to demonstrate that the local public schools are failing to meet the educational needs of the subgroups mentioned.*

### Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer comments:

Even though the Norfolk City Public Schools data show an increase in student academic achievement in reading, math, and science, there continues to be an achievement gap between Whites and the Gap Groups from the 2012-13 to 2014-15 school years as shown in the chart below. The numbers in RED indicate the achievement gaps. BBWA is ready to assist the NCPS in closing the achievement gap for the students enrolled at the Academy by offering museum learning through interdisciplinary approach and inquiry/project based learning.

	Reading			Mathematics			Science		
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Whites	80	79	83	76	80	85	87	88	89
Gap 1	52 (-28)	53(-26)	59(-24)	49 (-27)	54 (-26)	66 (-19)	60 (-27)	59 (-29)	66 (-23)
Gap 2	50(-30)	52(-27)	59(-24)	47 (-27)	53 (-27)	65 (-20)	58 (-29)	57 (-31)	65 (-24)
Gap 3	66(-14)	65(-14)	71(-12)	63 (-13)	68 (-12)	78 (-7)	76 (-11)	72 (16)	74 (-15)

2. An explanation of why the public charter school is being formed. (Is the school being formed at the requests of parents or community organizations? How was the need determined? What data were examined as part of the needs assessment? Briefly describe the need and include a summary of the quantitative data.)

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *The applicant includes general statements about the benefits of charter school settings for at-risk students but provides no quantitative or other data or research to support a need for this charter school. The school is referred to as the Museum Learning Academy and the Bertha B. Williams Academy. The applicant should be consistent with the name of the school.*

### Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer comments:

Public Charter schools are a proven means of improving educational opportunities for students (Evaluation of the Public Charter School Program, US Department of Education (Finnigan, et.al,

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2004) and the US DOE recognizes that charter schools disproportionately attract students and families who are poor and who are from African American and Hispanic backgrounds. According to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 15 of 16 “gold standard” research studies conducted on public charter school student achievement since 2010 have found that public charter schools are succeeding in improving education results. A 2013 study conducted by Stanford University’s Center for Research on Educational Outcomes on public charter school performance in 27 states found that charter school students are outperforming their peers in reading in traditional public schools and closing the achievement gap between student subgroups. Recent studies have shown that charter schools around the US are closing this achievement gap at a faster rate than traditional public schools, especially with regards to mathematics and reading (Robinson and Change, 2008). Thus, there is every reason to expect that BBWA will effectively meet Norfolk City’s need for academic improvement in this demographic sector. Norfolk City School System current enrollment as of September 30, 2015 was 32,149 students. The current demographic profile of the students is approximately 60% Black, 22% White, 8% Hispanic, 2% Asian, 1% American Indian, 1% South Pacific, and 6% more 2 races or more. (See Demographics Chart below.) The economic demographic of Norfolk City Schools’ students for the 2014-15 school year, according to the Virginia Department of Education, is 66.83%.

Demographics								
Counties	TOTAL	Hispanics	Am. Indian	Asian	Black	South Pacific	White	Two+ Races
Norfolk	32,149	2,555	140	713	19,582	112	7,087	1,928
Arlington	25,364	7,381	98	2,294	2,674	20	11,616	1,344
Loudoun	76,228	12,539	355	14,737	5,117	75	39,456	3,949
DeKalb, Ga.	101,389	16,950	250	6,471	64,742	147	11,117	1,712

The official name of the school is **Bertha B. Williams Academy** using a museum learning model implemented through an interdisciplinary theme base, project/inquiry based curriculum. According to numerous studies, it is in the best interest of the students and the teachers to assign topics that support one another (Brandt, 1991). We intend to base our interdisciplinary curriculum on a model of the Leonardo da Vinci Project used at both Barcroft Elementary in Arlington County and Middleburg Community Charter School in Loudoun County and the museum learning model at the Museum School in Georgia. (See demographics chart above.) The Norfolk City school systems’ current demographics and economic populations are similar to all three school systems. (Please see recent achievement data for Barcroft and Middleburg below. Information regarding the achievement gap in The Museum School in Georgia was not available at this time. However, the school site reports high achievement in both reading and mathematics.)

2014-15 School/County Data	Reading Pass Rate				Mathematics Pass Rate			
	White	Gap 1	Gap 2	Gap 3	White	Gap 1	Gap 2	Gap 3
Barcroft Elementary ~180 Students Tested	93	76	63	77	88	72	45	77
Arlington, Va.	96	71	74	71	95	76	76	77
Middleburg Elementary ~47 Students Tested (1 <sup>st</sup> Year )	81	27	>	>	77	45	>	>
Loudoun County, Va.	90	68	75	73	88	68	71	72

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➤ 3 students or less

3. An explanation of why a public charter school is an appropriate vehicle to address the identified need.

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *In the sections above and in this section, the applicant claims that a museum-style curriculum, smaller class sizes, greater staff to student interactions, and extended learning time will address the needs of the student population. However, no data or research is provided to support that these approaches have a positive academic impact on students.*

## **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer comments:**

Below is a brief summary of research to support the benefits of extended learning time, a museum learning curriculum, student/teacher interactions, and small class size.

**Extended learning Time:** The Virginia Department of Education supports extended learning time for students experiencing academic difficulties and needing additional learning time to grasp and/or deepen the students understanding of taught/learned concepts. The Virginia JLARC report indicated the benefits of extended learning time.

**Museum Learning:** There are substantial benefits to utilizing programs provided by museums. In the Downey, Delamatre, and Jones (2007) study on the impact of Museum School Programs, findings showed that learning through museums positively impacted critical thinking skills specifically student learning in general. D. W. Swan (2014) reported children who visited museums during kindergarten had higher achievement scores in reading, mathematics, and science than children who did not visit the museums. Key findings by the University in UK indicated museums inspire powerful learning in children. The research showed very clearly how effective museum learning can be in stimulating learning across the range of dimensions. (Department of Museum Studies, 2004)

**Student/Teacher Interaction:** Consistent evidence suggest that to improve students' academic achievement and social skill development, the focus must be on the nature and quality of teacher /student interaction. Research conducted by UVA in over 6,000 classrooms concluded that in grades PK-5 students in classrooms with higher teacher-student interactions realized greater gains in achievement and social skill development. (Mashburn, Pianta, et.al., 2010).

**Small Class Size:** According to a recent article by Ehrenberg, Brewer, Willms, and et.al., there are a number of disadvantages of large class size. Large class size reduces the amount of active engagement with each other, increases disruptive behavior in the classroom, reduces the amount of time for student/teacher interaction, reduces the content teacher can cover, eliminates many methods of assessing students, and reduces the learning by reducing the kind of teaching methods that the teacher can employ. In D. Zyngier's study "Class size and academic results, with a focus on children from culturally, linguistically and economically disenfranchised communities", the author examined class size reduction and its effect on student achievement by analyzing 112 peer-reviewed studies, and showed that the overwhelming majority of these studies found that smaller classes have a significant impact on student achievement and narrowing the achievement gap. (2004).

**VI. Educational Program:** Describe the public charter school's educational program. The following components must be addressed:

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *There are insufficient details noted about the educational program throughout this section as outlined below. Certain elements were either not addressed or there were insufficient details as noted below to evaluate the school's educational program.*

1. A synopsis of the public charter school's educational program.
2. A description of the pupil performance standards and curriculum, which must meet or exceed any applicable Virginia SOQ, [Sections 22.1-253.13:1](#) through [22.1-253.13:9](#), *Code of Virginia*.

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):**

- *The list of Kindergarten standards is not complete (K7-13 English are not listed). English writing standards should be listed.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The omission of the complete list of kindergarten English and writing standards was an oversight. All standards have been added in both areas in the revised application.

- *The proposed time allotted for the planned foreign language program does not meet the recommended minimum of 75 minutes per week, with classes meeting at least every other day as outlined in the guidance provided by the American Council for Teaching Foreign Languages.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The proposed time allotted for the planned foreign language program (Spanish) has been revised to meet the minimum requirement of 75 minutes per week, with classes meeting at least every other day whenever possible.

- *The listing of the K-5 Virginia Studies History and Social Science SOL does not include all the standards for each course. The economics SOL is missing in each of the courses.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The listing of the K-5 Virginia Studies History and Social Science as well as economics SOLs have been added to this section. These revisions are available for follow up review in the revised application packet.

- *The science, health education, and physical education standards are not fully addressed in the educational program.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The science, health education and physical education standards are now fully addressed in the educational program section of the application.

- *Standards for each content area are not fully addressed.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

All standards for each content area are now fully addressed in the revised application packet.

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3. A description of how the Virginia SOL and the corresponding SOL Curriculum Framework will be used as the foundation for curricula to be implemented for each grade or course in the public charter school. Include within the description how the goals and objectives of the curricula will meet or exceed the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL), address student performance standards, relate to state and federal assessment standards, and include measurable student outcomes (See <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/index.shtml> on the Department's Web site for more information about the SOL).

### REVIEWER COMMENT(S):

- *Issues for all content areas were addressed under item 2 of this section.*

### Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:

All content areas have been addressed under item 2 of this section.

- *There is no applicable Virginia SOL for foreign language and the application does not show how outcomes will be measured in foreign language classes or what the anticipated proficiency levels will be upon completion.*

### Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:

The foreign language (Spanish) curriculum has been added to the attachments

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- *The curriculum development section on Pg. 20 lists visual arts but not music; both are "core disciplines." The application should include that visual arts and music instruction will be guided by and reflect the Visual Arts Standards of Learning and the Music Standards of Learning.*

### Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:

The omission of reference to Music standards of learning was an oversight. Both visual arts and music instruction will be guided by and reflect the standards of learning in both disciplines.

4. A description of any internal and external assessments to be used to measure pupil progress towards achievement of the school's pupil performance standards, in addition to the SOL assessments prescribed by [Section 22.1-253.13:3](#), in the *Code of Virginia*.

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *Descriptions of numerous assessments are provided; however, it is not stated that SOL tests will be administered as required by the Code of Virginia.*

### Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:

On pages 21 and 22 of the application, reference is made to preparing the students for the annual SOL testing, exceeding SOL pass rates, and achieving high test scores on the Standards of Learning assessment. Additionally, a statement will be added in the Internal and External Assessment section regarding SOL testing. "SOL tests will be administered as required by the Code of Virginia."



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5. A description of the public charter school assessment plan to obtain student performance data, which includes how the data will be used to monitor and improve achievement and how program effectiveness will be measured over a specified period of time. Also provide benchmark data on how student achievement will be measured and how these data will be established and documented in the first year of operation and how the data will be measured over each year of the term of the charter as approved by the local school board. The benchmark data should address targets for student improvement to be met in each year.

### REVIEWER COMMENT(S):

- *In English, the applicant references state assessments in grades 2-5. One reference incorrectly indicates state assessment administered at grade 2. Virginia does not administer state assessments in grade 2.*

### Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:

The application has been corrected to reflect the deletion of grade 2 and replacing the SOL tested grades to 3-5.

- *The applicant lists tests to be used but does not indicate how data will be measured over each year. The application might be strengthened by adding descriptions of performance and/or proficiency assessments to be used in the foreign language program as mentioned in number 3 above.*

### Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:

BBWA will create grade-level assessments to measure student performance after units of study and at the end of each quarter. When students fail to meet the academic benchmarks, the staff will provide a range of prevention strategies to avoid further failure and retention. We will look holistically at school-wide assessment data to take stock of our school progress toward our over goals. We will disaggregate this data to determine the effectiveness of our program for specific groups of students, including specific grade levels, students with special needs, students with giftedness, and at-risk students. We will make adjustments to our program as needed in order to better serve our students as well as close the achievement gap for our entire population. This data will be provided to NCPS as required for transparency, provided all appropriate steps are taken to clear the data of identifiers that could undermine the privacy of the students.

All BBWA kindergarten students will be given the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS). Students that receive interventions in grades 1 and 2, as well as students new to Virginia in grades K-2, will also be given PALS. Students scoring below grade-level expectation I literacy areas will receive additional reading support. The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) will be administered three times a year to all BBWA students in grades 1-5.

Assessment for Spanish will be conducted through periodic formative evaluations to determine students' progress in Spanish. The results of these assessments will be used to modify instruction. Students' language development is assessed more formally twice a year, at the end of each semester. All Grade 5 students who have had Spanish for a full k-5 sequence will participate in the STAMP 4Se (STAndards-based Measurement of Proficiency, from the Avant Assessment). The STAMP 4Se is an online proficiency-based assessment aligned to the ACTFL Standards for listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the target language.

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- *Performance-based assessments for K-3 history and social science are not evident. For science, 6.4.2 indicates the assessments will be nationally-normed with no indication that these are aligned to Virginia science standards.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

Performance based assessments aligned with Virginia standards of learning in the core subjects and the arts will be administered quarterly to K-5 students. The national normed tests referenced in 6.4.2 will be an additional assessment similar to the IOWA or Stanford 10 Achievement assessments covering grade level objections. The SOL assessments will cover grade level Virginia standards of learning.

- *The applicant indicates benchmarks for student achievement will be established, but no details are provided about the process for establishing benchmarks.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

Benchmarks for grade level performance will follow the NCPS Department of Instruction guidelines in coordination with BBWA's expectations. Examples are as follow. On school based assessments, all students will score at or above 80% to be considered proficient in the areas assessed. In reading, the students will be expected to read at or above the recommended DRA levels at each grade. Writing skills will be assessed using the rubric recommended by VDOE.

6. The timeline for achievement of pupil performance standards, in accordance with the Virginia SOL.
7. An explanation of the corrective actions to be taken in the event that pupil performance at the public charter school falls below the standards outlined in the Virginia Board of Education's [\*Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia\*](#), (8 VAC 20-131-310).

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *Sufficient information regarding schoolwide corrective actions of the BBWA related to 8 VAC 20-131-310, which requires an academic review for any school that fails to meet requirements for full accreditation, is not provided. Although research-based instructional interventions for reading and mathematics are included as corrective actions in the regulation, this information was not included on Pgs. 80 - 81.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

In the event BBWA does not meet full accreditation and/or does not meet the AMOs for subgroups, BBWA will adhere to the requirements of developing a three-year school improvement plan which will include the following components: a description of how the school will meet the accreditation benchmarks, or the requirements to be full accredited; specific measures for achieving and documenting student academic improvement; the amount of time in the school day devoted to instruction in the core academic area; instructional practices designed to remediate students who have not been successful on SOL tests; intervention strategies

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designed to prevent further declines in student performance; staff development needed; strategies to involve and assist parents in raising their child's academic performance; the need for flexibility or waivers to state or local regulations to meet the objectives of the plan; and a description of the manner in which local, state, and federal funds are used to support the implementation of the plan. The plan will focus specifically on the interventions for those students at risk of not passing a SOL assessment including English language learners and students with disabilities. This plan will be designed by a school-based academic review team in collaboration with the NCPS School Improvement Office staff.

8. Information regarding the minimum and maximum enrollment per grade for each year during the term of the charter contract, as well as class size and structure for each grade served by the public charter school.

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *More information about how BBWA will use the librarian in the classroom would be helpful.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The librarian will perform the duties and responsibilities of a school librarian as well as plan collaboratively and co-teach with the classroom teachers on SOLs focused on research as well as assist with project based units.

9. Information regarding the proposed calendar and a sample daily schedule, including any plans to open prior to Labor Day and how and when a waiver to open early will be submitted by the local school board to the Virginia Board of Education, under [§ 22.1-79.1](#), of the *Code of Virginia*.

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *Although the calendar indicates the school would open August 4, the applicant did not include a plan to submit a pre-Labor Day opening waiver request (Pgs. 83 – 86). In addition, prayer is included as part of morning activities. However, the Code of Virginia at 22.1-203 provides “the school board of each school division shall establish the daily observance of one minute of silence in each classroom of the division.” In Virginia, school officials may not impose prayers.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

Once the application is approved, the applicant will submit the pre-Labor Day opening waiver request as required by the state of Virginia to open school before Labor Day. Prayer will not be included in the daily opening. The opening will include one minute of silence in each classroom.

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10. A description of plans for identifying and successfully serving: a) students with disabilities; b) English Language Learners (ELLs); c) academically at-risk students; and d) gifted and talented students. Such plans must include the extent of the involvement of the local school board in providing such services and must comply with state and federal laws and regulations.

### **REVIEWER COMMENT(S):**

- There is no information included to describe the plan used for English Language Learners (ELLs). Norfolk City Public Schools (NCPS) receive Title III, Part A, funding for the language instruction of ELLs; therefore, the charter school must adhere to all division wide Title III, Part A, policies and procedures.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

Students who are English Language Learners will be identified upon admittance to BBWA in accordance with Norfolk City Public Schools. Before each school year, a home language questionnaire will be given to newly enrolled students to identify students needing further assessment. BBWA will provide ELL instruction as needed to all identified ELL students within our population. The charter school will adhere to all division wide Title III, Part A, policies and procedures.

- The manner in which students will be identified as academically at-risk is not addressed. Examples of types of services that may be offered are provided; however, it should be clarified whether these are specifically for students with disabilities or for any identified students.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

All Students performing below the beginning of the year and quarterly assessments in the reading, math, and science will be identified as academically at-risk and will receive interventions through the RTi process as determined by the school staff.

- "Guidance Counselor and School Nurse" were indicated in the budget, but information regarding the school counseling program, the role of the school nurse, school social workers, and school psychologists were not discussed. The mission indicates that the school will work with "poor students." The application should expand on strategies that the school will use to work with economically disadvantaged students and their myriad of situations.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

Families of disadvantaged students needing financial support and assistance will be referred to the social worker for support. The school counselor, psychologist, nurse, and social worker will be part of the school's student assistance team with the principal to address individual needs of referred students. All members of this team are expected to carry out the duties and responsibilities expected of NCPS and BBWA. The Board agreed that the term "poor students" should be deleted from the application and replaced with the economically disadvantaged students.

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- *Giftedness is not assessed as students enter the school. There is no mention of the program or service options provided to gifted students within the disciplines. Identification procedures should be addressed.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

BBWA will strive to address the individual needs of each student through differentiated instruction. BBWA will employ a teacher with gifted certification to run the gifted program. Depending on enrollment numbers this individual may also serve as the math or reading resource teacher, provided they have the appropriate certifications. A Student Learning Plan will be created for every child, which will set individualized learning goals and track student progress over time.

Gifted and Gifted Assessment Program will include all Kindergarten through 2nd grade students throughout the school year, as well as 3rd through 5th grade students during the first quarter of every school year. This program is intended to provide structured lessons which are integrated into project based learning on a daily or weekly basis. The gifted program will implement a curriculum for all learners throughout all grade levels that supports mathematical problem solving, scientific reasoning, logic, creativity and analytical skills. The following instructional strategies may be used to provide course expectations with ability levels for all learners.

o Acceleration and Advanced Reading Materials: Students may be accelerated in each of the course levels. As part of the differentiation, students may be given reading materials and texts more suited to their higher reading skills and vocabulary.

o Competitions: Competitions, such as Continental Math, that promote higher level thinking, creativity, or problem solving skills may be used.

o Concept based lessons: Units of study based on themes or concepts are used to increase student understanding of content areas connected through interdisciplinary concepts.

o Independent Research: Students explore areas of interest or questions with guidance from the classroom teacher.

o Inquiry-Based Instruction: Using a variety of resources, students generate and explore questions and/or problems.

o Problem Finding (analysis) and Problem Solving: Based on one the program goals, students learn to identify a problem using task analysis.

o Service and Outreach Projects: Service-learning activities, as available to students through community-based opportunities.

o Simulations: Students participate in role-playing gain experiences in solving real world problems, issues, and scenarios.

### Grade 3-5 Gifted Program

BBWA grade 3-5 gifted program will identify and serve students in grades 3 – 5 who demonstrate or have the potential to demonstrate superior reasoning; persistent intellectual curiosity; advanced use of language; exceptional problem solving; rapid acquisition and mastery of facts, concepts, and principles; and creative and imaginative expression beyond their age-level peers in a broad range of intellectual disciplines and/or in specific academic areas, including language arts, mathematics, or science.

### Indicators of Giftedness

BBWA will use multiple indicators of giftedness in Literacy and across the subjects, including Science, Technology, Engineering, Art (and Music), and Mathematics.

### Identification Process

The faculty will identify students by using the following methodology:

o Screening: Starting in Grade 2, each student will be screened by taking a group administered nationally norm-referenced achievement test, such as the Iowa Tests for Basic Skills or the

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Stanford Achievement Test (“Achievement Test”) in addition to the CoGAT Test. Students scoring in the 95%ile or higher will be referred for additional data collection and assessment.

o Referral: In addition to testing, a student may be referred by a parent, teacher or other individual familiar with the student’s achievement(s).

o Assessment: The assessment process will include at least 3 of the following measures:

Achievement Test (required)\*

Appropriate ratings scales or checklists

Assessment of appropriate student products, performance, or portfolio Record of previous accomplishments (such as awards, honors, grades, etc.) Individual interview

For the 2016-2017 school year, the previous year’s results from a CoGAT administered by NCPS and other school systems national recognized standardized tests may be used.

- The applicant should describe the level of collaboration and/or information exchange with the school division in the evaluation and identification of students’ eligibility for special education. (Pg. 86, section 6.10.1).*

### **Applicant’s RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

Bertha B. Williams Academy will strive to provide special education services to our students in the least restrictive environment possible. BBWA will employ a full time special education specialist who will work with our children with identified needs. Additionally, we will contract with NCPS to offer a wide range of licensed staff to meet any specific needs, engaging diagnosticians and therapists as is required. Instruction for special education students will utilize the co-teaching model when possible and collaboration between educators, parents and the student will be our priority.

Consistent with NCPS’ approach to special education, BBWA will provide special education instruction in an inclusive setting. We will incorporate the special education teacher into an integrated co-teaching model in our classrooms. Based on the assessed needs in a given classroom, Bertha B. Williams Academy will appropriately implement as necessary, some of the six models of co-teaching:

Team Teaching – Two teachers work together teaching the same material at the same time to the whole class.

Parallel Teaching – Both teachers teach at the same time, splitting the class into two separate groups and covering the same information. This allows students more opportunity to respond and participate in a smaller group.

Station Teaching – Students are divided into multiple groups (2 or 3) and rotate between the co-teachers. Each teacher then teaches the content to each group. Alternative Teaching – One teacher teaches several students who need individualized attention while the other teacher teaches the larger group.

One Teach, One Assist – One teacher maintains prime responsibility of the instruction while the other teacher circulates through the room providing noninvasive assistance and instruction.

One Teach, One Observe – One teacher instructs while the other observes. This method is used to gather specific data to analyze for future instruction.

- The applicant should demonstrate knowledge of the 65 business day timeline for completing evaluation, composition of the various teams, and annual review of IEP and implementation of the IEP by staff.*

### **Applicant’s RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant understands the identification process and implementation of special education services. Student Eligibility/Placement Procedures). A teacher, Principal, supervisor, parent, or other interested person may initiate a referral of a child to a Local School Screening Committee



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if it is believed that the child may be in need of special education services; b) Eligibility for special education services is determined by the Special Education Eligibility Committee in accordance with Federal, State, and Local regulations governing the operation of special education programs for students with disabilities; and c) Placement of eligible children in a special education program may occur only after the development of an Individualized Educational Program in accordance with the procedures outlined in the State and Federal regulations.

11. A description of the learning environment (such as classroom-based or independent study), class size and structure, curriculum overview, teaching methods, and scientifically research-based instructional strategies to be used at the public charter school to ensure student achievement.

12. A description of co-curricular or extracurricular programs to be offered and how they will be funded and delivered. If applicable, the following components should be addressed by the proposed public charter school:

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *The applicant should explain how the extracurricular programs will be funded. The Standards of Accreditation prohibit K-5 athletics.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The afterschool program will be provided as an extended learning experience addressing the needs of the whole child. The program will be funded via grants, donation, flex scheduling for staff, and where appropriate on a sliding scale fee. The sports activities will be structured as recreational/intramural events only. There will be no athletic program organized at BBWA. BBWA will work closely with the local parks and recreation department to coordinate class offerings.

13. If the public charter school plans to utilize virtual learning in its educational program, identify the virtual learning source, describe how virtual learning will be used and estimate how many students may participate.

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *The applicant references the use of technology more often than the use of virtual learning. However, there are references to the use of technology in an interactive online setting that could be interpreted as using virtual learning.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The use of technology is for the purpose of interactive learning on-and off- line. Usage of technology is intended for the integration in the planned lessons and learning activities. Usage is not intended for virtual learning.

14. A general description of any alternative accreditation plans, in accordance with the Virginia Board of Education's [\*Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia\*](#) (8 VAC 20-131-280), that the public charter school would request the local school board to submit to the Virginia Board of Education for approval.

**REVIEWER COMMENT(S):** *It is not clear if alternative accreditation plans will be requested, if needed.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

BBWA does not intend to request an alternative accreditation plan through the NCPS.

15. A general description of any alternative accreditation plan for serving students with disabilities, in accordance with the Virginia Board of Education's [\*Regulations Governing Special Education Programs For Children With Disabilities in Virginia\*](#) (8 VAC 20-80-40) that the public charter school would request the local school board to

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submit to the Virginia Board of Education for approval.

### Logistical Components

**VIII. Displacement:** Describe the plan for the displacement of pupils, teachers, and other employees who will not attend or be employed in the public charter school, in instances of the conversion of an existing public school to a public charter school, and for the placement of public charter school pupils, teachers, and employees upon the decision to revoke or fail to renew the charter. ([Section 22.1-212.10](#), and [Section 22.1-212.12](#) Code of Virginia)

The following components must be addressed:

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *Certain elements were either not addressed or there were insufficient details as noted below describing the plan for the displacement of pupils, teachers, and other employees.*

1. Identification of a member of the school's leadership who will serve as a single point of contact for all activities that may need to take place in order for the school to close, including but not limited to the transfer of students to another school, the management of student records, and the settlement of financial obligations.
2. A notification process to parents/guardians of students attending the school and teachers and administrators of the closure date.
3. A notification process to parents/guardians of students attending the public charter school of alternative public school placements within a set time period from the date that the closure is announced.
4. Provisions for ensuring that student records are provided to the parent/guardian or another school identified by the parent or guardian within a set time period. If the student transfers to another school division, provisions for the transfer of the student's record to the school division to which the student transfers shall be made upon the request of that school division. ([Section 22.1-289](#), Code of Virginia)

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *The applicant did not address access of student records by the parents by the proper method.*

#### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

Records of students transferring to other schools within the NCPS will be sent confidentially via school mail at the request of the receiving school. A release of information from the parent for students' records will remain on file in the school's record room. Once a student officially withdraws, the student's record will be placed in the Inactive file until the school receives a release of information to send student file to receiving school.

5. Notification to the local school board of a list of all students in the school and the names of the schools to which these students will transfer.

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *This information was not addressed in the application.*

#### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

In the event BBWA closes, the NCPS school board will be given a list all students in this school and the names of the schools to which these students will transfer.



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6. A placement plan for school employees that details the level of assistance to be provided within a set period of time from the date of closure. For teachers and administrators, the level of assistance should address finding employment within the school division where the public charter school is located or other public school divisions.

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *A timeline was not referenced*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

Should there be a termination or revocation of the charter, BBWA/NCPS employees will be reassigned to positions with NCPS. BBWA will work closely with the NCPS Human Resources staff in developing the placement plan with a timeline for school employees. BBWA Board will recommend that the school closure date coincide with the traditional school year calendar. Unplanned, semi-permanent displacement due to partial or complete destruction of the building will be covered in the BBWA Emergency Plan which will be developed by the BBWA Board. The Disaster Recovery portion of the Emergency Plan will define the immediate post disaster actions, including the relocation of classes to alternate location. The BBWA Board will identify alternative sites should the existing facility be destroyed or is not accessible for an extended period of time. Additionally, the BBWA Board will secure documented assurances from managers, agents, or owners that those facilities will be available if needed. Assurances will be updated annually.

7. A close-out plan related to financial obligations and audits, the termination of contracts and leases, and the sale and disposition of assets within a set period of time from the date of closure. The plan shall include the disposition of the school's records and financial accounts upon closure.

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *The close-out plan appears to be an unmodified template for Maryland-based charter schools. While it includes many of the necessary tasks for close-out, it should be refined and references to Maryland state law and Maryland Department of Education removed. Also, it is unlikely that the final close-out audit can be funded for the \$5,000 figure noted on Pg. 102.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The close-out plan has been revised with the removal of referencing Maryland Law and Maryland Department of Education and replaced with Virginia state law and Virginia Department of Education. The final close-out audit cost has been increased. The budget has been adjusted to reflect this increase.

**Business Components**

**XI. Economic Soundness:** Evidence that the plan for the public charter school is economically sound for both the public charter school and the school division or relevant school divisions. The following components should be addressed:

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *Insufficient details as noted below did not support evidence that the plan for the public charter school is economically sound.*

1. A description of the public charter school's financial plan, including financial controls and audit requirements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

**REVIEWER COMMENT:**

- *If the budget is dependent on subsequent negotiation/approval by the school board, then adopting the charter school budget may need to happen earlier than June. The applicant should clarify that the annual audit will be conducted by an independent, external audit entity and not the internal audit review committee.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

-The budget is dependent on subsequent negotiations approval by the NCPS. Therefore, the budget for the subsequent fiscal year shall be proposed by the Board of Directors in December/January and adopted after the NCPS' budget is approved. A budget and other information that illustrate the proposed charter school are economically sound for both the charter school and Norfolk City School Division are describe in this section. Included are detailed sources of revenue and expenditures for the proposed term of the charter (at most three years) and a description of the manner in which an annual audit of the financial and administrative operations of the charter school, including any services provided by the School Division, will be conducted. Anticipated gifts, grants or donations are included.

At the close of each fiscal year, the accounts of the BBWA shall be audited by an independent auditor, who is either a Certified Public Accountant or a Registered Municipal Accountant, and who has expertise in accounting of tax-exempt organizations generally. The auditor shall be hired for this purpose by a majority vote of the Directors present at the regular public meeting at which the motion to hire the auditor is being considered. The audit shall be done in compliance with Virginia statutes governing public chartered schools and with all applicable state and federal laws controlling non-profit tax-exempt corporations. Copies of the audit shall be provided to agencies in accordance with Virginia statutes.

Preliminary research indicates that there exists a number of possible governmental and private foundation sources for grants to support the start-up and operation of charter schools. In an effort to be conservative in estimating grant revenues and thereby avoid over-stating the financial case for the charter school, we have limited our projected grant revenue to that available from the US Dept of Education under the Charter Schools Program Non-State Educational Agencies

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(NON-SEA) Planning, Program Design, and Initial Implementation Grant. This is a multi-year (typically three years) grant provided to assist charter school start-ups. In 2012, grants were awarded to eighteen schools with first year funding totaling \$3.523 million. The smallest grant had a first year funding of \$141,703. Therefore, we chose to project, conservatively, grant revenues of \$65,000 for the first year and \$200,00 each of the following two years.

This budget has been designed around our school curriculum and educational structural requirements, all of which meet or exceed the VA Standards of Quality (SOQ). We have projected 3 tiers of enrollment, 240, 340, and 440 students to illustrate our staffing and budgeting for Bertha B. Williams Academy. The actual enrollment numbers will vary and the budget will be adjusted to accommodate changing situations.

- *Section 10.1.1.6 General, item 6, Pg. 109 indicates "Current financial records may be held by the Treasurer." In 10.1.1.7 the Treasurer's responsibilities/duties are overlapped. Proper internal control requires accounting records from the person(s) with the physical custody of the assets be separate. Authorization, custody, record keeping, and reconciliation should be divided among staff to reduce the potential for fraud.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

-In reference to the Reviewer Comment on Sections 10.1.6. and 10.1.1.7, the Board of Directors of the charter school will create a finance committee that will include as members at least the BOD chairman and treasurer. The finance committee will be responsible for the financial operations of the charter school and for reporting to the Board and to the School Board on the financial operations and condition of the charter school. The duties of the finance committee will include preparing an annual budget, ensuring adherence to the budget, preparing monthly financial reports for the board and the School Board, preparing the IRS form 990, and contracting for an annual audit by an independent entity chosen by the Board of Directors. The Finance committee will recommend financial controls to be instituted by the Board such as pre-authorized expenditure limits by staff, requirements for dual check signing and issuance and use of credit cards.

- *The reference in section 10.1.2.2 to OMB Circular A-133 is now outdated and should reflect 2CFR200 (OMB Super Circular). The threshold for federal spending is now \$750,000.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

-Section 10.1.2.2 has been updated to reflect the current threshold for federal spending to the amount of \$750,000.

2. Proposed start-up and three-year budgets with clearly stated assumptions and information regarding projected revenues and expenditures.

### **REVIEWER COMMENT:**

- *The proposed budget includes 2015-2016 as an operational year; however, operation is not likely this year. Source of state revenues in the proposed budget should be clarified.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

-The proposed budget has been revised for the operational year to be 2017-18. The source of state revenues is reflected in the newly proposed budget.

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- *Fringe benefits are not itemized by benefit type. School meals and transportation arrangements appear unfinished, but some projected costs are shown. Final cost projections for these items are critical.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

-The entire budget has been revised to reflect benefit types, school meals, and transportation. Final cost projections are now included. The new 2017-18 budget is attached with the addition of pre-planning and preparation revenues and expenses.

- *The applicant states that there will be a three percent cost of living salary increase for employees; however, it is not clear if the annual revenue will sufficiently cover annual increases.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

-The applicant has removed the cost of living salary increase for employees given the fact that most of BBWA will be NCPS employees. BBWA will follow NCPS salaries and benefits structure.

- *Projected surplus amounts do not appear to relate to projected revenues vs. expenditures. For salaries, the applicant refers to "VDOE median range." The source/reference should be listed.*
- **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

-Projected surplus amount have been revised to reflect the relationship between the projected revenues and expenditures. Projected salaries will be based upon NCPS' pay scale utilizing an average level teacher salary on the NCPS ladder. We relied upon Step 6, Masters level projections for this document. Actual staffing may change depending upon the seniority of the staff hired and the needs of the school as we enroll students and grow.

- *The applicant assumes receipt of federal charter school grant and substantial business and foundation funding sources for operations with receipt of those funds critical to support proposed expenditures. However, these grants and sources of funding are not guaranteed. The budget proposes significant use of federal funds for equipment which can be restricted under certain grants.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The budget has been revised to reflect the primary funding coming from per pupil revenue and charter school funding from both the federal and state funding. Other funding will occur as grants are written and granted.

- *The applicant should clarify how Pgs. 115-116 of the application relate to subsequent figures on Pgs. 117-118 in the budget. The detail on Pgs. 119-121 do not correlate with other budget pages. Numerous mathematical errors in the budget totals should be corrected.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The proposed budget pages referred to above have been replaced with the newly revised budget. The revised budget utilized already approved and operating public charter schools' budgets as references. The revised budget is attached.

3. Proposed start-up and three-year cash flow projections with clearly stated assumptions and indications of short- and long-term sources of revenue.

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**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *Total expenses vary from those shown in section 10.2. The applicant should state when expenses will begin and provide projected revenue, including timing for receipt of cash flow assessment against expenditures.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

10.2-10.3 Sections have been revised to reflect the revised budget attached.

4. Evidence of anticipated fundraising contributions, if claimed in this application.

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *A fundraising amount is shown, but information documenting how the amount was determined is not provided. Section 10.2.3 of the application projects substantially more funding from foundations and business partnerships than the \$250,000 listed in this section.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The fundraising information has been revised in newly proposed budget attached.

5. A description of the funding agreement that the public charter school intends to have with the local education agency, including information regarding anticipated local, state, and federal per-pupil-amounts to be received and any information pertaining to the maintenance of facilities. In accordance with [Section 22.1-212.14](#) of the *Code of Virginia*, the per pupil funding provided to the charter school shall be negotiated in the charter agreement and shall be commensurate with the average school-based costs of educating the students in the existing schools in the division or divisions unless the cost of operating the charter school is less than that average school-based cost. To the extent discussions have been held with the school division, please describe the outcome of those discussions. If there have been no discussions to date, please indicate the reason.

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *This component should be re-examined. The information is related to fundraising, but it should address per-pupil amounts agreed to with the division.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

This application was discussed with the Interim Superintendent. The newly proposed budget reflects per-pupil spending which will be discussed with the new Superintendent and members of the NCPS School Board.

**XII. Management and Operation:** Describe the management and operation of the public charter school, including the nature and extent of parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the management and operation of the public charter school. ([Section 22.1-212.7](#), *Code of Virginia*) The following components must be addressed to the extent the applicant is able, pending negotiations with the local school board:

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *Certain elements were either not addressed or there were insufficient details as noted below describing the management and operation of BBWA.*

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1. A description of any discussions, to date, with the local public school system or local school board where the charter school will be located regarding the management and operation of the public charter school.

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *The information presented does not reference any discussion with the local school board or the school division.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The applicant met with the Interim Superintendent to discuss the application and the possibility of opening BBWA to assist with closing the achievement gap.

2. A description of the functions, roles, and duties of the management committee, the school's leadership, and any other entities shown in the organizational chart, as defined in [Section 22.1-212.6](#) of the *Code of Virginia* and its proposed composition and bylaws.
3. An explanation of how support services will be funded and delivered. These services, include, but are not limited to: 1) food services; 2) school health services; 3) custodial services; 4) extracurricular activities; and 5) security services.

### **REVIEWER COMMENT:**

- *An explanation of how support services will be provided should be discussed in greater detail for school health, custodial, extracurricular, and security services.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

School Health services will be coordinated through the half-time nursing staff. Custodial services will be provided by a local cleaning company through NCPS staff. The extracurricular program will be staffed by afterschool instructors. Security services will be covered under utilities. Office staff and assistants will assist with visitors checking into the building. A security resource assistant will be added if necessary.

- *The applicant briefly addresses an explanation for providing food services to students by contracting with NCPS. However, it does not provide sufficient details about the method for providing breakfast and lunch to students, and there is no indication that the NCPS school nutrition program has been involved or consulted.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

BBWA will collaborate with NCPS Food Services to discuss the possibility of providing students breakfast and lunch meals. If this is not possible, BBWA will use a local provider for food services for students and staff that meet or exceed the state and federal guidelines.

4. An explanation of any partnerships or contractual relationships (education management organization, food services, school health services, custodial services, security services, etc.) central to the school's operations or mission, including information regarding the relationship of all contractors to the governing board of the public charter school, and information regarding how contractors and the employees of the contractors having direct contact with



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students will comply with the provisions of Section 22.1-296.1, of the *Code of Virginia*.

### REVIEWER COMMENT:

- *The preliminary budget should address whether meals would be vended or prepared on site.*

### Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:

If the building has food services equipment, meals will be prepared on site. If the building does not have a full service kitchen, then the food will be prepared off site and delivered either by NCPS or a contracted food service company.

- *The applicant indicates breakfast and lunch will be negotiated with NCPS. Since the population would include economically disadvantaged students whose family income would qualify the student for free or reduced price meals with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reimbursable meals program, contracting with NCPS's nutrition programs is preferable.*

### Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:

-The revised budget reflects the breakfast/lunch services provided by NCPS or a local food services provider. The budget reflects covering students eligible to receive free or reduced price meals to be reimbursed by contracting with NCPS's nutrition program. However, an expense has been budgeted in the event the meals are not provided by NCPS.

5. A proposed start-up plan, identifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals.

### REVIEWER COMMENT:

- *RE Dates were missing from the start-up plan*

### Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:

The start-up plan has been added to the application. The timeline is as follows:

Tasks	Date	Person Responsible
Submit Application to VDOE	August, 2015	BBWA Board of Directors- (BOD) Founder- Dr. Lois Williams
Request Meeting with NCPS School Board Rep and Superintendent	August, 2015 November, 2015	Dr. Lois Williams
Forward Application to SB and Superintendent	December, 2015	Dr. Lois Williams
Meet with NCPS School Board Rep. and Superintendent	December, 2015	BBWA Board of Directors
Finalize Application for School Board	December, 2015	Dr. Lois Williams
Advertise for Students and Parents	March -December, 2016	BBWA Board of Directors
Comprehensions	April, 2016	BBWA Board of

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Building Evaluation		Directors
BBWA files for 501c (if needed)	TBD	
Assess Furniture, Technology and Curriculum needs	April, 2016	BBWA Board of Directors
Receive Public Input	TBD	NCPS School Board
Application Approved	June, 2016	NCPS School Board
Charter School Committee advertise and select principal	July, 2016	BBWA Board of Directors
File for State and Federal Grants	July, 2016	BBWA Consultant
Submit Waiver to Open School before Labor Day	August, 2016	BBWA Board of Director Chair and Superintendent
Negotiate Charter	September, 2016	BBWA BOD and School Board
Accept Student Applications	January, 2017	BBWA Board of Directors
Advertise for School Staff	January, 2017	BBWA BOD and NCPS
Hire Principal	April, 2017	BBWA BOD
Recommend Teachers and Staff for Hire	April-May, 2017	BBWA Principal and committee
Acquire Furniture, Technology and Curriculum	April, 2017	BBWA Board of Directors and Principal
Set-up School Setting	Late April-June, 2017	BBWA BOD, Principal and Staff
Open House for new students	July, 2017	Principal and School Staff
Training for Teachers and Staff	June-July, 2017	Principal and NCPS HR Dept.
Orientation for Parents/ Students	End of July, 2017	School Staff
First Day of School	August 1, 2017	Staff, Students & Families

6. A proposed organization chart that clearly presents the school's organizational structure, including the lines of authority and reporting between the management committee, staff, any related bodies (such as parent teacher organizations, the school division and any external organizations) that will play a role in managing the school.

### **REVIEWER COMMENT:**

*RE: The lines of authority and reporting need to be revised. For example, the organizational chart indicates that the NCPS school board reports to the NCPS school superintendent.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The lines of authority and reporting have been revised. The lines of authority are described below.



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The Board will not be involved in day-to-day operations of the school, but will act as a policy making body and will meet once per month, or as needed, to ensure the school is operating according to the agreement with NCPS and that it continues to serve as a voice for the community in which the school serves.

The BBWA Board of Directors (hereafter “Board”) is the legal entity that will enter into a charter agreement with the Norfolk City School Board, and establish and oversee BBWA. The Board will be responsible for negotiating and assuring compliance with the charter agreement (and any enacted amendments), ensuring adherence to applicable laws and regulations, making policy decisions, and upholding, maintaining and sustaining the mission and vision of BBWA. Should there be any dispute or question regarding the conduct of any employee of the BBWA who is not an employee of NCPS; senior staff of NCPS shall be able to communicate directly with the President of the Board through clearly established channels that will be laid out in the terms of the contract between BBWA and NCPS.

Relationship of Board of Directors with Faculty, Parents, and Students The Board’s primary role is one of governance and support. All Board members will have a clear understanding of the difference between governance and management as part of the orientation process. The parent organization will work directly with the Principal but not interfere with the workings of the Planning and Management Committee.

The BBWA Planning and Management Committee will oversee the daily operations of Bertha B. Williams Academy. The Principal shall act as chair. The School Planning and Management Committee will be guided by the Board and is responsible for implementing the vision of the school. All day-to-day operational decisions will be made by the Principal, and carried out by the Principal with the support of the Management Committee, both of which will be held accountable by the Board for school performance and implementation of operational decisions.

7. Plans for recruiting and developing school leadership and staff.

**XIII. *Employment Terms and Conditions:*** Provide an explanation of the relationship that will exist between the proposed public charter school and its employees, including evidence that the terms and conditions of employment have been addressed with affected employees. ([Sections 22.1-212.13](#), [22.1-296.1](#), [22.1-296.2](#), and [22.1-296.4](#), *Code of Virginia*) At the discretion of the local school board, charter school personnel may be employees of the local school board, or boards, granting the charter. Any personnel not employed by the local school board shall remain subject to the provisions of §§ [22.1-296.1](#), [22.1-296.2](#), and [22.1-296.4](#). The following components must be addressed:

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *Certain elements were either not addressed or there were insufficient details as noted below describing the employment terms and conditions at BBWA.*

1. A plan that addresses the qualifications of teachers and administrators at the public charter school, including compliance with state law and regulation regarding Virginia Board of Education licensing endorsements.

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *Teachers, not all instructional personnel, are referenced. Instructional personnel must meet local policies, as well as state and federal laws and regulations. The applicant should state whether BBWA plans to adhere to having their staff only teach courses that they are licensed to teach.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

All instructional staff must meet the local policies as well as state and federal laws and regulations. BBWA teachers will only teach courses that they are licensed to teach. The revised application will include this language.

2. A plan to provide high-quality professional development programs ([Section 22.1-253.13:5](#), *Code of Virginia*).

**REVIEWER COMMENT:**

- *Section 22.1-253.13.5 of the Code of Virginia requires high-quality professional development in areas that are not addressed in this plan. These areas include gifted students, students with disabilities, ELLs, and educational technology. Requirements are provided in Section 22.1-253.13.5 of the Code of Virginia.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

Only highly qualified teachers endorsed in their assigned teaching areas will be recommended to NCPS for employment and teach in their licensed areas. All specialists are listed in the budget.

- *Additional information is needed regarding access to professional development. The applicant states that teachers will plan their own professional development opportunities. It is not clear what role the principal will play or what professional development will be available for administrators and other staff members. Resources should be described for mentoring and offering high quality professional development.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

The instructional staff and principal will plan a School-wide Professional Development calendar focused on the Museum Learning model with an interdisciplinary approach. Additionally, the staff will participate in countywide mandatory training. Staff will also be encouraged to take advantage of professional learning opportunities to continue their learning. New teachers to the profession will be mentored by tenured teachers in the building. The principal will not only participate in school-wide professional development but will attend NCPS principals' meetings and take advantage of professional development focused on instructional school leadership.

3. Provisions for the evaluation of staff at regular intervals and in accordance with state law and regulation.

**REVIEWER COMMENT:**

- *The applicant mentions evaluation guidelines for teachers only. Evaluation of all staff, including administrators, needs to be addressed. BBWA should articulate and adhere to the NCPS School Board's policies as well as state laws and regulations. A definition of the probationary period is needed.*

**Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

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Evaluations of all staff including the principal will follow the NCPS School Board's policies as well as state laws and regulations. The probationary period for teachers will be a three-year cycle. The principal is on annual contract and evaluated by a Virginia licensed school administrator.

- *The statement, "Regulations governing salaries will be promulgated by the director," needs to be clarified. BBWA should address expectations of formal and informal observations for staff and provide a detailed timeline of due dates for evaluations.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

All BBWA teachers and instructional assistants' salaries will be the same as the NCPS since these employees will be employed by NCPS. The informal and formal observations and evaluations will followed the established timeline of NCPS. The Principal's evaluation will follow the timeline of the NCPS' timeline for administrators using VDOE evaluation.

4. Provisions for a human resource policy for the public charter school that is consistent with state and federal law.

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *The applicant states that "a human resource policy will be developed" and the policy will mirror the "Norfolk Schools human resources program." The applicant should clarify whether charter school personnel will be employed by the NCPS.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

BBWA instructional staff will be employees of NCPS. Therefore, a separate human resource policy will not be developed. All BBWA staff will be expected to follow the NCPS policies and procedures and the BBWA expectations.

5. Notification to all school employees of the terms and conditions of employment.

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *BBWA needs to elaborate on the employment terms and conditions and how BBWA will ensure all employees are notified of them.*

### **Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:**

All BBWA employees will be notified in writing the employment terms and conditions.

6. A staffing chart for the school's first year and a staffing plan for the term of the contract.

**REVIEWER COMMENT:** *The applicant does not address details about staffing, other than class size (Pg. 87). The staffing chart should identify all staff, including the director, charter school board members, and any others such as special education teachers, ESL teachers, and transportation workers.*

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### Applicant's RESPONSE to Reviewer Comments:

This information is detailed in the budget. However, a copy of it is below.

Faculty Positions	Support Staff
Kindergarten	Secretary/Bookkeeper
First	Nurse
Second	Teaching Assistants
Third	Technology Assistant
Fourth	NCPS Bus Drivers
Fifth	NCPS Food Services (TBD)
Special Education	
P.E.	
Art	
Music	
Spanish	
ESOL	
Librarian	
Guidance	
Principal	